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ABSTRACT

This practicum was designed to improve a high school education media center through systematic collective action. The goal was to improve delivery of education media services by: (1) improving material conditions; (2) developing collaboration between education media specialists and academic teachers; and (3) involvement of the entire learning community in employing research to shape the effort by which the media services could be brought up to standards. Activities included writing and distributing a newsletter; systematically monitoring progress on meeting accreditation standards; starting Friends of the Library and Young Adult Literature groups; developing a program of student media tutors to work with peers; seeking private funding for needed improvements; and developing a long range plan. Results included the creation a multimedia room; funding for an online satellite disc; funding of a feasibility study to generate more media space; improvements in print, nonprint, and microfiche materials; acquisition of an Infotrac unit, three microcomputers, and a laser disc in the media center; a complete reorganization of the media administrative structure; and an increase in the number of users. (Contains 22 references.) (Author/KRN)

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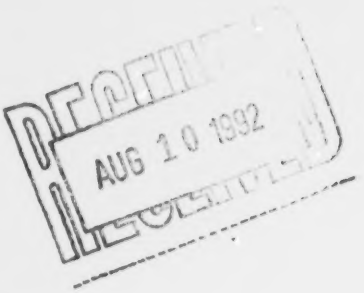


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# Systematic Collective Action to Improve Media Services in a High School Library

by

Francis R. McLellan

Cluster 43

A Practicum I Report Presented to the Ed. D. Program in Child and Youth Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1992

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PRACTICUM APPROVAL SHEET

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Approved:

July 12, 1992
Date of Final Approval of Report

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William W. Anderson, Ed.D.

## ABSTRACT

Systematic Collective Action to Improve Media Services in a High School Library. McLellan, Francis R., 1992: Practicum Report, Nova University, Ed. D. Program in Child and Youth Studies.

This practicum was designed to improve a high school education media center through systematic collective action. Written by an English teacher who served for several years on a library self-evaluation faculty committee, the goal of the practicum was to improve delivery of education media services by improving material conditions, by collaboration between education media specialists and academic teachers, and by involvement of the entire learning community in employing research values to shape the effort by which the education media services might be brought up to regional accreditation standards. Symptoms of improved attitudes would include greater learning community support for education media and a clear increase in use of education media materials. The writer sought to collaborate informally with other faculty to create a core of student peer teachers who would be willing to introduce other students to the education media offerings.

In fact the collective action was successful. Results included the creation of a multi-media room, funding for an online satellite disc, funding of a feasibility study to generate more education media space, material improvements in print, nonprint and microfiche materials, an Infotrac unit, three computers and a laser disc in the education media area, a long range plan to fund media materials, a complete reorganization of the education media administrative structure, increased student peer group media instruction, and statistical evidence that the education media center was serving more users than during the same period of the previous academic year. Goals of improving written communication regarding education media activity and independent advocacy committee for the media center were deferred due to reorganization concerns. The use of local research to implement more effective media services has found administrative support.

Recommendations include implementing the deferred goals of the practicum. Dissemination of the practicum report will include placement in school and local libraries, and wide sharing with the local learning community including parents, teachers, students, librarians, administrators, and media specialists.


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# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

## Description of Community

This residential suburb is governed by a town meeting of between 150 and 200 members who serve as political pulse for a town manager and his board of five selectmen. The community is about 20 miles from a major industrial and educational center, and houses a new industrial park for international manufacturers.

A historical society, an active choral society, an Arts Council, numerous fraternal organizations, twelve churches and synagogues, two newspapers, two hospitals, an international cultural organization, and town-supported recreational programs provide solid social infrastructure.

New jobs and housing expansion have allowed the town to add nearly a million dollars annually in tax revenue for three consecutive years prior to 1990. Since 1990 population increases and housing starts have persisted in spite of the recession. Parental hopes remain high for children in this town where 75% of students expect to continue education beyond high school.

## Writer's Work Setting and Role

The work setting is the school library media center located in the oldest (1923) of three distinct building structures linked by connecting corridors on twenty acres in a residential area one mile from the center of this suburban town. The town population is 24, 418.

The high school is a four year comprehensive school, grades nine through twelve with a population of 99 teachers and 1149 students. While the town population is stable, a high percentage of immigrant Portuguese students requires two bilingual teachers. There is a small sprinkling of Southeast Asians and African American students, (under 100), as well. Of all students, 95.6% graduate while 4.4% drop out. Aspirants to four-year college

comprise 50%, while an additional 15% expect to attend community college. Of the class of 1988, 73% took the SAT examinations. Educators at this school share a strong sense of purpose. They show genuine respect for students, loyalty to professional values, and take pride in their academic chores, but lack of funding has negatively affected the work setting.

The library embodies key indicators of neglect. The library media center is meagerly used, lacks comfortable furniture, is poorly stocked with materials, and is poorly lighted. Since the 1980 regional accreditation visit, the library education media center has stagnated. The library staff admits that for more than ten years there has been no complete inventory of print and nonprint materials. If such an inventory were to be made, the staff claims that the library's holdings and facilities would fall below minimal standards as set by any of the professional librarians' advocacy groups.

The writer is a member of the academic faculty who is chairperson of the Media Services Standards committee, a group whose role is to monitor the quality of education media services in the interest of maintaining regional accreditation standards.

Impetus for the writer's involvement comes from a visiting regional accreditation team's negative report on library consumer services that threatens the school's accreditation. To help the school meet standards, the visiting team advanced a 21 recommendations agenda that calls for a systematic, collective action plan.

The setting involves personnel problems due to role confusion. There is no person who serves as high school librarian except the school-wide director of education media services who is aided by two part-time personnel and a few part-time students. Such was the situation this past year when the regional report was issued.

The chief administrator involved at this writing is the school principal. Two year progress reports in improving media services will be signed by the principal and by the writer who had served for three years as chairperson of the Media Services self study committee which predicted the accreditation team's negative appraisal of media services. As chairperson of the Media Services Standards committee, the writer's advisory role carries the weight of faculty opinion, experience and authority. The writer's role in signing the progress reports implies that faculty experience and professional research form the substantive background of the

school's strategies for change. Though the principal is the executive leader of the task force for change, the writer represents the advice and consent of the entire deliberative faculty thought process regarding practical measures to improve library consumer services.

The faculty self-study committee on media services representing ten departments, measured, observed and shared consensual reactions to the education media problem. The physical area of the library was so overheated in the two extreme seasons of the year that videos melted and other equipment was rendered useless. In itemized reports and in answers to specific analytic questions, faculty reported deficiencies in holdings, area space, lighting, planning, and lack of information literacy instruction. The media committee interviewed students, parents, budget administrators, consultant and community librarians, school committee and university librarians.

Over two years ago, the writer informed key administrators of the committee's findings and predictions. All administrators expressed concern and support. The writer then set out to research the problems, to become as expert as possible in order to advance remedies to the problem that might be more profound and far

reaching than remedies absent research. Though a more detailed review of the problem research and the solution research will follow in later chapters, it might be instructive to note the impact of research in the community setting. The writer made known to school community stakeholders the research findings of Merriam (1988), who addressed the problem both by copious school visitations and by literature reviews. The work of Miller and Shontz (1991) also provided ideas that helped to convince administration that the writer could play a leading advocacy and communications role, under the principal's leadership,and with the library staff's cooperation in forging cooperative remedial strategies as the problem unraveled itself.

In the autumn of 1991, the administration responded to the problem. The principal wrote a report indicating that additional funds for the education media center had been granted by a concerned parents' group, by the graduating class, and by the school committee. He included a summary of materials the additional funds would supply. Two part-time media specialists were added to the library staff and a new storage room was provided. The faculty study committee was reorganized with the principal as an adjunct

member and the writer as chairperson. Still, old problems remained and some new problems arose.

## CHAPTER II

## STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

### Problem Description

Stated briefly, the problem is to provide quality media services that will advance the school's curriculum. Students need print and nonprint media and staff to help them gain access to education media in a clean, well-lighted, aesthetically pleasing place. As Mathews (1990) demonstrated no other institution but the school library can provide students with the information keys essential to self realization in our age of advanced information technology. Wellsprings of youthful curiosity and delight in discovery as well as awareness of worldwide issues and vision for the future are at stake (p.36).

### Problem Documentation

Evidence that access to quality education media is severely hampered in the library described in Chapter I exists in empirical

abundance. Previous and current faculty committee observations and reports mirror the 21 items enumerated by the regional accreditation committee. These specific details include such palpable items as insufficient space for books, outdated print collections, paucity of paperback books, antiquated fiction collection, small microfiche collection, crowded media space, no comfortable furniture, no computerized circulation system, no plan for transport of video and audio equipment, no software for producing instructional materials, no plan for student information literacy instruction, no in-service plan for teachers to gain access to print and nonprint materials, no research-based curriculum, and use of library space for meetings not connected with education media resources or services.

A preliminary progress report from the principal indicates that partial remedies such as can be provided by adding staff and some funds have been applied. The report indicates that other remedies are also under study. A survey of all faculty shows unanimous dissatisfaction with print and nonprint collections. Analytical questionnaires filled out by faculty committee members indicated deficiencies that coincided with those listed above.

Student observations, letters, complaints, and interviews with library staff show that quality education media services and resources remain a serious problem. The faculty committee met in September and found that the space allegedly allotted in the principal's report for storage was not as large as indicated. The committee intends to measure the space and report back at its next meeting. The committee also expressed reservations regarding the use, the qualifications, and the effectiveness of the two new part-time library media specialists, and has resolved to investigate further.

Further faculty committee observations note that the physical remedies advanced are still unaccomplished. The media space remains dark, overheated and uncomfortable. Their interview with the director of library services reveals that no schedule exists for implementing the planned work, that the $13,000.00 budget for the library has generated fewer than 120 books, even though the funds have been spent. Positive results include a limited electronic bookshelf program, and Infotrac system and $1949.00 worth of hardcover fiction and critical works.

Faculty committee observations also note that the education

media center was not opened for students until September 23, 1991 due to preoccupation with library work on the part of the library staff. Even though library staff claims preliminary gains in student use of the library, deisgnated committee observers suggest that these gains are insignificant. Clearly a need exists to establish coherent and correct numbers of student users over a definite period of time. As of October's end, committee observers note that even though as many as thirty new books are on display, the shelves are quite bare of books, and no new furnishings or improvements were in evidence.

## Causative Analysis

Some chief causes of the problem are listed below.

1. For many years funding and staffing have been inadequate. A habitual staff inaction and student avoidance of the media center suggests an apathy belied by the optimism of the library staff director. Effervescent personalities gloss over a vacuous reality. Not much is going on.

2. There has been no strong voice to support quality education media services.

3. No system-wide planning has provided for computerized circulation and coordination of education media services.

4. Short term prescriptive planning rather than long range implementation of a shared vision has hampered effective remedies for the problem.

5. Authority for dealing with the problem is decentered. Although there are many articles that deal with access to quality education media through the medium of information literacy, three professional groups claim the solution of the problem as their domain. The state education department bears the legal responsibility under Chapter 15 of the State Code. The regional accreditation agency bears professional responsibility, and the education media specialists' professional state association advocates certification standards for libraries and personnel.

## Relationship of the Problem to the Literature

A literature review reveals that underlying the problem of access to quality education media is the larger problem of how to teach information literacy to high school students. One key problem is the changing role of the library media specialist in instruction

from the 1950's to the 1980's (Craver, 1986). One dean of a library school refuses to admit the education media specialist's teaching role at all (McCrank, 1991). Nevertheless, writers such as John Naisbitt (1982) predicted accurately that information-based jobs will provide economic, social and political opportunities for youth as America continues to move further away from a blue collar based economy. Thus many researchers have been surveying online databases, electronic technology impact and print/nonprint materials to assess their impact on the conceptual awareness of students (Wozney,1982; Pruitt, 1985; Merriam, 1988). These writers, with Naisbitt, also emphasize that teaching students how to learn, how to think critically, is a concomitant of teaching information skills. Academic librarians like McCrank would argue against any move to employ librarians as critical thinking educators. Wilson (1981) and Dunn (1982) led the way in providing research to explain why information seeking behavior finds motivational roots in some learners but not in others. Dunn found that self-extension and need for the approval of others can be strong motivating factors in learners who cultivate informational literacy strategies and concomitant critical thinking. These

findings suggest that education media specialists, research librarians, and academic teachers who teach critical thinking should be working closely together. Furthermore, when school libraries can become laboratories where teachers and media specialists develop critical thinking and information literacy skills in a collaborative effort, new formulas for access to quality education media will emerge. A common librarian/teacher focus can dramatically empower the intellectual, critical and cultural growth of the whole student.

Curriculum guides and syllabuses divide information literacy into three generic areas: inquiry/investigation, reading guidance/ literary appreciation and uses of computer/nonprint materials (New York State Regents, 1990). Pennsylvania has been more proactive in mandating that schools teach required informational search proces kills at all ability levels. Pennsylvania Online, first published in 1985, has become a prototype model for states wishing to help high school students develop skills and awareness in using online informational skills. As Merriam points out, Pennsylvania is a leader both in shaping informational literacy programs and in establishing communications networks throughout the state. While

it is true that state curriculum guides such as those above can help us to organize for teaching information literacy, writers like Caywood (1991) show specific instances of confusion that can arise when teachers and media specialists fail to communicate or articulate their respective domains. A seemingly insuperable obstacle prominently featured in the summer, 1991 issues of School Library Journal and all library journals in America is the current financial crunch.

Inadequate support, authority diffusion and role confusion can and do combine to serve as roots of the education media specialist's dilemma when she tries to find access to quality education media for the high school student. In the situation under discussion here, the state department of education sets minimum standards for adequate personnel, resources, services and local budget support as the legally charged guardian of quality education media standards. The statewide professional association of education media specialists sets financially prohibitive standards, and the regional accreditation agency sets practical improvement goals. In our case at hand, the regional accreditation agency has reviewed the empirical data provided by the faculty review

committee and the library staff. The accreditation team used these reports to form a perception of a practical mean between the minimal state department of education standards and the more demanding standards of the education media specialists.

Part of the problem with this school library is that there is no squeaky wheel, no strong advocacy voice between ten year accreditation periods. The budget suffers cuts or is spent on needs that are ancillary at best to education media resources and services such as security systems. Updating is neglected because there is no negotiations dynamic and because of the already compromised position of the media specialist who is vulnerable to the entire educational community.

Administrators truly believe that they are allocating more than sufficient funds. The media specialist is often called upon to help out when teachers, administrators, parents or students have special or emergency needs. All too frequently when there is a hole in the educational dike, the media specialist is perceived by members of the community as someone who is available to help out in ways not appropriate to the media specialist's position. Of course teachers and administrators are

similarly vulnerable, but the media specialist is often more visible.

An important role for the academic teacher, then, is to provide interim advocacy, practical perspective like that of the accreditation team, and collaboration in teaching critical thinking skills.

## CHAPTER III

## ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND EVALUATION INSTRUMENTS

### Goals and Expectations

The goal of this practicum is to make the library/ education media center serve its consumers well. Evidence presented in Chapter II shows lack of users, of space, of materials, of circulation and instruction plans, and confusion regarding appropriate use of librarians' talents and appropriate use of library space. Goals will include:

1. Increasing communication to increase library use. Over the three month implementation period, the library staff will publish at least two newsletters that will meet 80% of the criteria identified as associated with journalistic values as judged by the library advocacy committee.

2. Advancing the action plan for implementing the 21 items posed as recommendations by the accreditation visiting committee. The advocacy committee will collect and review written suggestions by all interested members of the larger school

community responsive to the 21 recommendations. A report accounting for progress on these items will be published by the advocacy committee to the accreditation team. A progress report based on advocacy committee findings will be issued at mid-point in the practicum, and a final report will reflect the measure of success in expectation that all 21 items have been significantly remedied.

3. Establishing a wider advocacy voice for the library. Objectives to see this goal through will include the formation of two new consumer advocacy groups by the end of the three month period-- a "Friends of the Library" group, and a "Young Adult Literature" reading group, both composed of school students, teachers, graduates and parents. The librarian and the Advocacy Committee chairperson will co-chair both new groups until officers can be elected.

4. Measuring the progress of the systematic plan through surveys of consumer response to changes. The Advocacy Committee will collaborate with the library staff to share records of student usage and faculty participation in implementing both the 21 recommendations of the visiting committee, and the ongoing

information literacy program. The library staff will keep and share student attendance records on a daily basis. The faculty will receive a copy of the 21 items recommended, and will respond on a scale from 1 (Excellent) to 10 (Poor - in need of redress) to each item. The Advocacy Committee Chair will maintain these consumer response records.

## Expected Outcomes

The expectation, then, is that through natural collaborative processes such as student friendship, teacher/librarian sharing of formative plans for information literacy instruction, and from individual consumer curiosity and need to learn, positive action will guarantee that the library is serving its consumers well. Critical thinking and information literacy will thrive in a lively education media center where friends meet and teachers collaborate.

## CHAPTER IV

## SOLUTION STRATEGY

### Discussion and Evaluation of Solutions

The problem is that the education media center is not serving its consumers, the high school community, well. The solutions begin with united school and community support, additional funding and staffing, staff role clarification, purchase of quality print and nonprint materials, more hardware/software purchases, and research based, information literacy curriculum in place. Miller and Shontz suggest five ideas:

1. Library media centers are not fixed assets. They require continuing financial support.

2. Unless resources are upgraded and replaced, adequate programs cannot be developed.

3. Research finding should be used intelligently. Media specialists must do local research with teachers and students to communicate research findings and to support arguments for better collections and media services.

4. The value of the media specialist will be measured by the quality of the specialist's effort in getting teachers and students to use resources not by the quality of effort in running the media center.

5. Keeping careful records of expenditures is needed to support requests for funding.

Highlights of Merriam's (1988) school library study are:

1. Promote informational literacy through guided practice to develop thinking skills needed to locate, evaluate and use information effectively.

2. School librarians should co-plan the curriculum to provide working knowledge of reference tools.

3. Retain backfiles of materials students find perennially useful-- for example the most frequently used periodicals.

4. Students grades on research papers and projects should include an informational resources factor.

5. Learning to think and how to learn should be highlighted in student and faculty publications.

6. A labor consultant offers the insight that a little research can often go a long way to help the librarian gain self confidence

and greater personal effectiveness. A whole panoply of rights is available to the librarian who is suddenly told to take charge of the computer lab while performing regular tasks. Such factors as recognition clauses, contracted planning time, clear job descriptions, clerical assistance, extended service contracts, separate evaluation instruments and mandatory subjects of bargaining can dispel role confusion and free the librarian to do education media work (Bonas & Heylman, 1990).

7. One writer sees society as taking advantage of the securities of librarians who are "critical people full of self doubt." (Bohannan, 1991, p. 217). Another writer (Rothstein,1986) believes librarians to be "...people of high native capacity... willing to undergo a long period of preparation for jobs that don't pay well." (p. 48) . Other literature suggests that quality media access can mean using student and teacher book selection committees together with a field trip to go shopping at their city's largest book store. This would combine involvement, leadership and fun (Bohannan, 1991).

Joyce and Weil (1986) would expand the librarian's role to include involvement in working to develop inquiry training and the conceptual clustering process used in on line searching to improve

processing and preparation of information. With Wilson (1981) and Dunn (1982), these theorists would oppose McCrank (1991) to give the librarian media specialist a role in teaching critical thinking as well as in information literacy instruction.

The self reflection of writers like Dunn that leads them to ask why and to try to find a tentative, creative answer is the same root of creativity that makes Joyce and Weil want to reach out to create a collaborative learning culture (Garmston, 1991). Unlike McCrank, staff developers know that the focus of the learning culture is on moving students to work hard and to achieve greater satisfaction from their efforts. Proficiency in using intellectual and technological tools is the subversive agenda of this practicum. Only with training, support and permission to be self reflective can the librarian extend to take on new roles.

Positive, solution-oriented literature suggests that the library can advance the schools across curriculum writing program. It is also imperative that library rules, systems and objectives be stated and met.

1. By the end of the implementation period, a long range plan will be produced by the faculty committee and endorsed by the

administration to continue to improve student access to quality education media resources and services. This plan will reflect the contributions of all legitimate stakeholders in the education media center.

2. The writer's role will be to monitor the progress made in addressing the 21 items for the accreditation recommendations as chairperson of the faculty education media committee.

3. The writer will also model research based curriculum collaboration with the Director of library services.

4. The writer will monitor the progress of new media areas, especially the new multi-media room to be established and staffed in a location two buildings away from the library media center. The writer will plan at least three programs for this media center.

5. The writer will use the library education media center for online bibliography and database research with students. Careful records and skills charts will be kept for each student.

6. Through the committee, questionnaires will be circulated in classes of cooperating teachers to assess the need for information skills in each department.

7. Trained students will be designated as media tutors to

peers.

8. Short term information literacy projects and critical thinking units will be designed for the In School Suspension room.

9. Collaboration with the principal to seek private funds for improvement of library resources.

10. Media specialists will give presentations to the writer's English classes with collaborative assignments on Infotrac and online bibliographies for standard research papers. A skills checklist will be drawn from discussion of the presentation, and each student will accomplish the objectives implicit in the list of skills .

11. Students will use the Electronic Bookshelf and answer questions on the programs provided.

12. Writing teachers in the tutorial room will introduce students to the word processor. Tutored students will teach peers until all students can demonstrate proficiency.

13. English and social studies teachers will collaborate on a social studies inquiry model as a start for interdepartmental information literacy skills effort. The library staff will lead this effort by uniting their research objectives to academic curriculum

goals.

14. Departments will be asked to remember the library's needs in their book orders and other budgets.

15. The writer will continue to use research as a source for solutions to the problem of access to quality education media.

16. Neither the education media center nor the staff should be regarded as fixed assets by the larger school community. The concept of continuing resource renewal should become explicit school policy, and education media work should remain inviolate.

17. Absent promised repairs and furniture orders, the principal and the advocacy committee will negotiate a grievance timeline up to school committee level.

18. Lesson plans, syllabuses and/or curriculum guides for information literacy will be requested of library staff.

19. An informal Young Adult literature group will be formed.

## Description and Justification for Solutions Selected

Perhaps the best justification for this solution is the context and reality of the situation itself. A plan is already in motion to address the library's problems through staffing, funding and

instituting a separate multi media center. Apathy is usually cured best in small ways, but formative suggestions are simply not enough. Educational leadership is called for. Whoever serves as leader is best guided by research and wider views. The compelling perspective, however, is the common focus on the empowerment of the cultural life of the whole student. In the school under discussion, all faculty are comitted to this common goal. As long as student empowerment is seen as the criterion for action to be taken, improving education media services in this setting should be as viable as it is challenging.

## Calendar Plan

The proposal is for a twelve week period. The projected timeline is given below:

1. Weeks 1 & 2: January 6-17, 1992

These are assignment and checklist weeks. Media and academic staff will set goals in three areas: information literacy skills, research-based curriculum goals, and critical thinking, (including construct scaffolding through online bibliographic searches). Six ideas new to this setting that are mentioned in this

proposal will be implemented.

A. Faculty and students will review peer coaching, and document the peer skills training process. This document will be a resource for the school and community, and will be placed in all town libraries.

B. Periodic review sessions to study suggestions and reactions to bulleting items will be held by participating faculty and committee members. In the first week, formative meetings will be called of two advocacy groups: "Friends of the Library," and "Young Adult Literature Circle." Calendars of events and speaker programs will be set for the duration of the school year. The librarian and the advocacy committee chairperson will co-chair these formative meetings until officers are elected.

C. Library and media transactions collected by the fifth week will be assessed to determine patterns of student media needs.

D. The writer will integrate information literacy skills into his own classes and offer across curriculum applications.

E. The media center will produce a newsletter of journalistic quality for the school community assisted by faculty members. Reading outreach opportunities and articles related to ways in

which departments can help the media program with print and other materials will be included in the newsletter.

F. Work orders for comfortable furniture and physical improvements of the education media center will be double-checked and advanced to implementation stages.

2. Weeks 3, 4, & 5: January 20-February 10, 1992

These weeks will introduce improvements in an orderly fashion.

A. Faculty and students will review peer coaching, and document the peer skills training process. This document will be a resource for the school and community, and will be placed in all town libraries.

B. Periodic review sessions to study suggestions and reactions to bulleting items will be held by participating faculty and committee members. In the first week, formative meetings will be called of two advocacy groups: "Friends of the Library," and "Young Adult Literature Circle." Calendars of events and speaker programs will be set for the duration of the school year. The librarian and the advocacy committee chairperson will co-chair

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F. Work orders for comfortable furniture and physical improvements of the education media center will be double-checked and advanced to implementation stages.

3. Weeks 6-10: February 17- March 20, 1992

Information literacy and media skills are in place for English courses. Programs will also be available for reading, social studies, science, health and human development classes.

A. The multimedia classroom for the above courses and for art will be staffed and will include a Macintosh computer,

LaserDisk player, a monitor, a printer, an overhead projector, Kodak Data Show (tc project computer screen and video disc software). Initial software includes Animal Pathfinders, The Miracle of LIfe, The National Gallery of Art, Point of View, Drugs and Substance Abuse and Aids. Media staff will offer faculty training in the use of the new classroom.

B. Research findings on accessing the materials in the town library and linking to online databases (Dialog) will be implemented when possible.

C. The principal as chief executive school officer will serve on the library committee in the leadership role to define its mission in advocating media skills access.

D. Measuring the progress of the systematic plan will take place during the sixth week. Consumer usage counts and the 21 recommendations faculty review (on a scale of 1-10) will be taken.

4. Weeks 11-12: March 23- April 6, 1992

Formative evaluations of the implementation period.

A. A final count of library and media transactions will be reviewed to discern meaningful patterns.

B. Students who participated in information literacy will critique their skills against checklists as part of the formative evaluation. Faculty will respond to the 21 item recommendations of the visiting committee on a scale of 1-10 as indicated. Interested faculty will critique the program and add comments.

C. Fndings of valuations will be published in the high school based Media Review.

D. Work orders and implementation of physical plant and furniture proposals will be evaluated. The evaluation will note that repair and replacement dates are to be set by media staff as objects of furniture wear out.

E. Book replacement budgets set before the implementation period will be reviewed. Recommendations based upon media specialists' professional standards will be advanced as a negotiations item for 1992-93.

F. Advocacy groups will express support for education media through a special petition to the school committee.

G. Reports to the regional accreditation agency will show that the education media center is meeting consumer needs.

At the end of the practicum, action plans will be in place to

enhance collaboration between the education media center and all school departments. Each department will have already sent at least ten students to do special library information seeking projects. An advocacy group consisting of 25 individuals will be attending meetings on Young Adult literature and other library interest programs. An exciting Young Adult literature publication will have been published at least four times. An information literacy awareness comic book originating from the media center will have been published. Funds, staff and teaching programs will be in place and available to improve information literacy awareness and critical thinking skills. Research-based curriculum will have been implemented in several English and social studies areas. The media center will have expanded with other reading and software centers in other areas of the school where they will be less likely to melt. Student peer teaching of Infotrac, microfiche, and other software will be in place. Teacher in-service programs for establishing research-based curriculum will be offered. At least ten teachers will have written research-based units.

The media center publication will record this progress, and extend opportunities for instruction to the entire school community.

## CHAPTER V

### Results

Significant progress has been made in this high school's collective action to remedy the problem - the deficiencies of its education media center - during the practicum period. From a formal standpoint, the applied collective action solution progressed through several levels. From 1989 to 1992, the levels of administrative input increased and intensified. In 1991, establishment of a new school committee led by a new Acting Superintendent of Schools, improved communications with the school committee. Through the process, collective action took these steps:

1. 1989: Self-Study Committee formed. (Writer as Chair).
2. 1990: Regional Accreditation Committee Visitation.
3. 1990-91: 21 Recommendations placed before Principal.
4. 1991: Faculty level Review Committee. (Writer as Chair).
5. January, 1992: New Ten Member Media Study Committee formed. Principal as Chair; writer as member.

6. March, 1992: Principal presents Media Committee plans to School Committee. Plans referred to Acting Superintendent.

7. March, 1992: Reorganization of Media Services administrative structure. Director of Library Services role abolished. Computer Director position open for next academic year. Two new positions established of Curriculum Director and Media Director.

8. March, 1992: Acting Superintendent redirects media efforts to process involving feasibility studies.

9. April, 1992: School Committee funds feasibility study.

## DISCUSSION

The Media Study committee, formed and led by the principal from January through March of 1992, was commissioned to articulate and present five alternate media center reorganization plans to the school committee. The school committee would then choose one of the plans or piece together its own plan from the variety of components presented. The Media Study members included the Assistant Principal, the Director of Library Services, two media specialists, the Computer Director, the Media Services

Committee Chair (the writer), the Accreditation Follow-Up Committee Chair, the Television Director and the Facilities Committee Chair.

A detailed analysis of the status of the four goals listed in Chapter III is as follows.

I. Improved communication to increase library use. Library media center will publish two quality newsletters.

Library use has increased through collaboration and communication. 1680 more students used the library from January to March of 1992 than during the same months in 1991. Additional communication regarding the library use is in evidence by the strategic plans now being proposed by staff, architects, and building consultants. No library media center newsletters appeared during the practicum period.

2. Advancing the 21 item action plan of the accreditation committee.

A progress report was sent by the principal to the regional accreditation team. A revised action plan was submitted to the school committee. Progress of the 21 items from the recommendations of the accreditation team awaits media

reorganization. The library/media center is still small, dreary and poorly lighted, though improvements in hardware and software have increased user population.

As the school committee deliberated over the plans, the media staff was tripled, a new multi-media center was established, a laser printer, three new computers, and additional print, non-print and microfiche were added to the library media center. Infotrac with other hardware and software were set in place, and a satellite-connected international online system was financed by the school committee.

Plans for research-based curriculum were initiated in English and social studies areas. Distracting non-library meetings were relegated to a previously empty office not at all connected with the media area. Collaboration with five local and neighboring librarians regarding media and young adult literature were scheduled, and a small, informal young adult literature interest group was formed made up of students, librarians, and two English teachers who are committed to future readings and discussions.

The new Media Study Committee endorsed a bold program to increase media center space from 4,354 square feet to 11,360

square feet. The principal presented the package proposal to the school committee with a plan that a $700,000.00 bond be approved to finance the project pursuant to a feasibility study. The school committee reacted positively by referring the recommendation to the Acting Superintendent of Schools. See Figure 1.

In his expressed concern for a reality based policy, the Acting Superintendent ordered a feasibility study with a view to consulting with architects and building construction experts before making his recommendation to the school committee. Upper administrative and school committee participation in this collective action to remedy the media services problems has not only resulted in the financing of the feasibility study and the satellite online disc, but has also resulted in the full opening of the media staffing structure so that the staff can be reorganized around the research concept that emerges from the needs assessment studies to be undertaken by a yet to be appointed Curriculum Coordinator.

One consequence of the problem's articulation at all school management levels is that some material problems are being addressed with remarkable economy and speed even while in-house education media research skills are widely shared among staff

members. Five media staff and five subject teachers are sharing the education media facilities and training students in information literacy. The administration is supporting the efforts of another doctoral candidate from the staff who has enjoyed sharing research, and is now beginning his own practicum by videotaping education media facilities in area schools hoping to integrate their most useful concepts and devices into our own media programs. Thus one positive impact of this practicum has been raising local awareness that our students need the sort of help that can best come from a research approach. Research as a tool in developing solutions to the problem of education media access is now a policy of the school administration and staff at all levels. Awareness of the need to use research dovetails with the school department's commitment to provide continuing staff and resource renewal. It seems entirely unlikely that media needs will be ignored in the forseeable future in this school system.

Reorganization of the entire media resources system, as well as the reality of an approved repair and furniture plan obviate the need for a grievance procedure. Procurement of information literacy syllabuses, lesson plans, and curriculum guides from library staff

remains as a recommendation. Departments have been asked to remember the education media needs in their budgets.

Close collaboration among English teachers, education media staff and social studies teachers remains a deferred goal and a recommendation for the future due to lack of formal readiness for such planning. Informal collaboration on individual information literacy projects is already in place, and formal curriculum adoption seems inevitable. Writing teachers are teaching the use of the word processor in writing classes, and a word processing/tutorial room will be available in Autumn of 1992 for the exclusive use of English composition classes.

3. To establish a wider advocacy voice for the library media center through a "Friends of the Library" group and a "Young Adult Literature" reading group, both composed of school students, teachers, graduates, and parents.

The Director of library services cooperated with the informal establishment of a Young Adult literature program in the writer's classes. Several speakers were scheduled, and issues were addressed. Meetings were held in the writer's classes rather than in the library due to the inability of the library to provide private

space during or after the school day. The writer recommends that such private space be provided in the new education media center to be established through the reorganization. The Director of Library Services deferred the establishment of a "Friends of the Library" group until September.

4. To measure the progress of the systematic plan through user serveys. An ongoing literacy program will be established.

The library staff kept user records as reflected in Table 1. Since the 21 item list of recommendations awaits redress by a reorganized media system, surveys of the 21 item consumer response would be premature at this time.

As suggested above, media staff members have been so preoccupied with presenting plans to the school committee that they have been unable to follow through on action plans. Nevertheless, the focus of the solution strategy has been on unity of school and community support, and all personnel have worked together harmoniously to achieve student learning goals consistent with the action plans of this practicum. Unable to provide a private area for working with students on young adult literature, the library setting has been a useful resource for students working individually

or in pairs in the young adult collection area.

Collaboration with the Director of library services to establish a model research based curriculum was accomplished informally by training of student peer tutors to use Infotrac, microfiche, and other education media hardware.

In the course of this practicum, the writer has trained twenty students in the information literacy areas available to them in our education media setting. These areas include use of the word-processor/computer, card catalogue use, Infotrac use, microfiche research, periodical indexes searches, bibliography organization, encyclopedia searches, biographical studies and abstraction ladder or ERIC type searches. Media staff, an English teacher colleague, a student teacher and students acting as peer teachers have assisted in this training. Online bibliography and database work goals were accomplished in two courses taught by the writer.

Though media staff was unable to provide exclusive time blocks to the training, their assistance was indispensable, generous, and empowering both for the writer and for the students. An excellent example can be found in the manner in which this chapter is being presented. Totally unable to use a word processor when

beginning this practicum, the writer is now competently typing these words onto a computer screen. Another indicator of the ratio of success of the media center and staff can be found in the statistics of the numbers of users of the library for the practicum period in contrast to the numbers of library users for the same length of time in the previous year. See Table 1, next page.

Table 1

Users of Education Media Services

| Pre-practicum Period 1991 | | Practicum Period 1992 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Jan. | 307 | Jan. | 85l |
| Feb. | 144 | Feb. | 642 |
| March | 223 | March | 861 |
| April | 302 | April | 811 |

## Recommendations

Implementing the deferred goals of the practicum is critical for continuing support for education media. These goals were to improve written communication from the media center to the entire school learning culture, and to establish independent advocacy. Pursuant to the feasibility study, advocates must take charge of a dialogue to see the goals firmly established. The superintendent should establish a task force composed of interested parents, students, and academic faculty. A comprehensive strategic plan should be written and considered in detail by an action committee composed of wiling stakeholders from school and community to set the course for the future. The research in this practicum provides a snapshot of where the school community now stands in the process. Without belaboring obvious and detailed remedies, e.g. to purchase hardware and software, this practicum recommends implementing the agreed upon plan, continuing to monitor the numbers of library/education media users and print/nonprint inventories, and expanding the information literacy programs to disciplines such as

science, mathematics, and home economics.

## Dissemination

This report will be available upon request to any interested professional, parent, or citizen. Copies will be placed in local town and school libraries. Additional copies may be obtained on written request from the author.

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